THE CHILDREN'S HOUR.

A MAGAZINE FOR THE LITTLE ONES.

MAY, 1874.

THE QUARREL.

By Mrs. E. B. Duffey.

BEHOLD before the glowing grate
Sits Master Willie Stanley;
He holds his father's pipe in state,
And thinks himself quite manly.

His sister Jane comes sweeping in,
Upon her head a bonnet,
Its ribbons tied beneath her chin,
And flowers and laces on it.

She wears, besides—you'd never guess
Unless you should behold her—

Her mother's splendid new silk dress;
Her head turns o'er her shoulder,

To see the long and rustling train
Spread out behind; while Willie
Cries out, "I wouldn't be so vain!
But girls are always silly.

"You think if you can only wear
A longer dress than common,
With bows and flounces everywhere,
You're really quite a woman."

"I think," cried Jane, with flushing face,
When Willie paused and let her—
"I think of flowers, bows and lace
The less you say, the better!

"You think a boy as small as you
Becomes a man by smoking.
Then laugh at all my flounces! Do!
I do not mind your joking."

So Willie laughed at sister Jane,
And Janie scolded Willie.
He called her "silly goose," and "vain;"
She called him worse than silly.

'Tis true they both have made mistake;
No fine and stylish bonnet
And trailing silk a woman make—
You may depend upon it.

And it is quite as much a joke
To think a boy more manly
Because he tries to learn to smoke,
Like Master Willie Stanley.

NEVER give up the good begun,
However hard, till it is done
Then let this motto be your light:
Never give up when you are right.

LITTLE MAY-BLOSSOM AND THE FAIRIES.

By Mrs. L. M. Blinn.

YOU never saw our little May-blossom, did you?

I needn't ask the question, for I know you never did. She has never traveled very far from her cradle but once, when we took her to the dear old homestead among the hills, that the loving eyes that had smiled upon our own infancy might rest upon the face of the baby grandchild, and that the trembling withered hands so soon to be folded away for a long quiet rest might first be laid in blessing upon the sunny hair of our little darling.

Of course you don't know anything about her, or you would think as we do—that she is the sweetest little blossom that ever the May-time brought. She is just one year old, and has great wondering blue eyes, and plump, dimpled cheeks, tinted like the inside of a sea-shell, fat arms that twenty times a day clasp my neck in loving caresses, and a voice like the cooing of a bird. Perhaps she wouldn't seem so sweet to you, for she isn't your little May-blossom at all, only just ours, and that, you know, makes a difference

We think she came straight to us from fairy-land, and that she has there a fairy godmother, who charms away from her sunny face all frowns and wrinkles, and whispers to her pleasant stories of the little sprites who live in the sea-shells in the ocean, and sing such sweet lulling songs in the pleasant weather, and sob and moan to give the sailors warning

when storms are coming, and of the delicate wood fairies who live in the hearts of the roses and flower-bells in the forest, and dance on the green moss by starlight.

Last night was her birth-night; and if you will believe it, some of the "little folks in green" paid her a visit. I don't know how they happened to allow me to see and hear them in their frolic on the lawn under the nursery window, for you know it is only the innocent children whom they love and trust, and our fairy-lore is all forgotten or called but "baby dreams" when once we outgrow the cradle and the nursery. Perhaps it was because my heart was so full of love and gratitude for the gift of the precious baby that it became for the time like that of a little child, and because of that some of the beautiful things that are revealed to babes, but hidden from the worldly-wise and prudent, were shown to me.

I suppose, children, some wise papas and mammas will shake their sagacious heads and say it was only a dream. Perhaps it was; if so, it was a very sweet one to me.

The moon was shining brightly on the lawn, and creeping through a rift in the casement, came slowly up to the head of the crib down the snowy pillow, and resting upon the golden curls lying on it, and upon the dimpled face they shaded, made a picture so beautiful that I bent softly to kiss it. As my lips touched the face of the little sleeper I heard the strangest, softest fluttering, as of tiny wings, and strains of music so faint that I held my breath to listen, yet as clear as the tinkling of silver bells. I turned to the window, and there on the lawn in the moonlight stood a group of the "little people." If they saw me, they were not disturbed in consequence, for more than one left the ring they were forming, and mounting the honeysuckle vine on the trellis, threw kisses at the sleeping baby.

At length one of the number, balancing herself upon the top of a tall blade of grass that she might overlook the rest and be distinctly heard by them, began this little song, the others joining in turn, and all the while the flowers in the garden swaying their heads and chiming a beautiful accompaniment to their rare melody.

SONG OF THE FAIRIES.

FIRST FAIRY.

"Fairies who live in the murmuring shell,
Rocked by the ocean's slumberous swell,
What gifts can ye bring to the little child
That mortals have lured from your home so wild?"

OCEAN FAIRIES.

"We will bring sweet light for her sunny eyes,
Paint her soft cheeks with the rarest dyes;
We will deepen her dimples with fingers light
And tint her lips with the coral bright;
Give for her teeth the lustrous pearl,
And golden gleams for each flaxen curl,
And bind her feet with a loving charm
That she never may stray to shame or harm."

FIRST FAIRY.

"Fairies who live in the woodland sweet,
Where the zephyrs follow your dancing feet,
What beautiful gifts from the mossy glade
Can your love bring to the little maid?"

WOOD FAIRIES.

"We will catch the south wind when it blows,
And fan the child to a soft repose;
We will gather the nectar the wild bees sip
From the thornless rose for the darling's lip:
We will bring the dew from the lily fair,
And sprinkle its gems in her shining hair,
And our fairy art shall charm away
All blight from the heart of the blossom, May."

ALL.

"From our homes in the shells and beside the fountain,
From the woodland buds in the cleft of the mountain,
From our haunts 'neath the fern-leaves in the brake,
From the lilies that float on the silver lake,
We promise to guard with charm and spell
The baby-mortal we love so well;
Creep through the casement with footsteps light,
Kiss the sleeper a soft 'good-night;'
Then away to our homes, for the clock strikes 'One;'
Come, fairies, come, our frolic is done!"

The wheezy clock in the old church tower struck "One," the fairies vanished from the green; the moon, passing under a cloud, just lingered long enough over the little pillow to show me that the baby was smiling in her sleep; and I am sure I felt the fluttering of a tiny pair of wings and saw a faint little shadow by the rift in the casement.

Was it a dream, I wonder?

A CUP OF COFFEE.

By Mrs. Ellen M. Mitchell.

SPILT all over the clean tablecloth, too! No wonder Rosy looked at the empty cup with tears in her eyes, for coffee was something she didn't have every day, and her mother had sweetened this so nicely, and put such nice yellow cream in it, and there wasn't any more, she was sure; and, oh dear! she couldn't help sobbing outright, thinking what a treat she'd missed. Mrs. Ray pitied her distress, though of course it was a trial to have her tablecloth stained, and she would have felt like scolding if it hadn't been an accident. The last drop had been drained out of the coffee-pot, or she would have given her little girl another cup. All she could do was to promise Rosy one the next morning, and like a wise, thoughtful mother try and divert her. For Mrs. Ray knew these little griefs are as keenly felt by children as graver ones by their elders.

"Do you know where coffee comes from, Rosy dear?" said she, softly.

Rosy didn't say anything, only shook her head.

"Well, there! stop crying, and I'll tell you all about it. You know how flour is made from wheat, and coffee comes from seeds in something the same way."

Rosy began to dry her eyes and wonder how that could be.

"I'll show you a picture of the coffee tree by and by," her mother continued. "It has been found in a wild state twenty-five feet high; but when cultivated, it is seldom more than ten. Its branches reach nearly to the ground in the latter case, though, while in the former they are very scanty. It has beautiful evergreen leaves, smooth and glossy, and where they join the stem you will find ever so many little snow-white flowers all cuddled up together. These flowers have a delicious smell, and finally change into fruit just as apple-blossoms do. The fruit is of a dark red color when ripe, and has two little cells with a seed in each."

"Oh, mamma, how funny! And are these seeds coffee? And don't you have to do anything but pick and roast them?" Rosy spoke with animation, and had evidently forgotten her mishap.

"Yes, dear," answered her mother. "The seeds have to be dried first, and then pressed between rollers, before they are fit for use. What we call coffee is only their outer covering or pulp."

"Why are they pressed, mamma? To make them hard?"

"Not exactly;" and her mother smiled. "They are always hard, even on the tree. The pressing is to remove the pulp. They are afterward winnowed and put up in bags ready for market."

"Winnowed?"

Rosy looked puzzled at the word.

"Winnow means to fan or to blow," said her mother. "By this process they are separated from what is worthless."

"But where does the coffee tree grow? You haven't told me that yet, mamma."

"It was first found in Arabia and Abyssinia, but is now cultivated in Java, Brazil, the West Indies and various other tropical countries. It only thrives where there is a great deal of heat and moisture. The trees are set out in rows, and are all kept of the same height. The third year after planting they begin to blossom, and keep on doing so for eight months, so that the fruits ripen at different times. As many as three gatherings are sometimes made in a year."

"Oh, mamma, I've a good mind to plant some coffee and see if it'll grow."

"If we had a hothouse and perfect seed, it might, but without either I'm afraid not." As Mrs. Ray said this she drew her chair back from the table, for just then Norah peeped in at the door as if impatient to clear away the dishes.

"Come, Rosy," she added, "you are through breakfast, are you not? Let's go and look at the picture now."

"Yes, mamma;" and Rosy jumped up with alacrity; for having heard so much of the coffee tree, she was curious to see how it looked. But I can't honestly say the picture came up to her expectations, for it wasn't colored, and only showed the form of the tree and of its leaves and fruit.

"Some people make a drink out of the leaves," her mother said, "but it isn't so good as that prepared from the seeds, or coffee-beans, as they are called."

"Beans!" echoed Rosy. "What an odd name for coffee! Why, they haven't any pods."

"The word comes from the Arabic, and is certainly better than a term frequently used—coffee-berries. For berries mean fruit, and not seeds."

Rosy tried to look wise, but didn't succeed, and Mrs. Ray with a smile remembered she was talking to a little girl who couldn't comprehend these distinctions in language.

"Coffee was first drank in England and France about two hundred years ago," said she. "It was brought to London by a merchant named Edwards. Crowds of people visited him daily on purpose to taste it, and this finally became such an annoyance he established his servant in a coffee-house."

"A coffee-house, mamma?"

"Yes, dear, a public place where coffee is made and sold by the cup. There had been one opened at Constantinople a hundred years before, for the Turks used coffee long before it was known to the rest of Europe."

"But, mamma, who first found out it was good to drink?"

"I can't tell you, Rosy. There isn't any one who knows. It was used in the East hundreds of years ago. But they seldom roast it there, as we do," replied Mrs. Ray.

"Not roast it?" and Rosy looked very much surprised. "Why, I shouldn't think 'twould be good at all."

"They have a different opinion, and make a drink out of the raw seeds that tastes even better to them than ours to us."

"Then let's try it ourselves, mamma, and see how we like it." Rosy was full of eagerness, and anxious to go into the kitchen and make some coffee on this new plan.

"'Twould be thrown away," her mother answered, "for our tastes are different from theirs; and besides, they pound and prepare it in a way of their own. But we've had a long talk about coffee, and it's nearly school-time now. So run and get ready, for I'm going to Mrs. Hale's, just a little beyond the schoolhouse, and you can walk with me if you like."

Rosy clapped her hands gleefully, for she thought this a great treat, and I presume most of my little readers would too. And now for the present we leave her, having told what came of the cup of coffee spilled on her mother's tablecloth. But I hope no one will follow her example; for though I haven't said it before, I'm afraid it was careless of her.

GOD IS EVERYWHERE.

ABOVE, below, where'er I gaze,
Thy guiding finger, Lord, I view;
Traced in the midnight planet's blaze,
Or glistening in the morning dew,
Whate'er is beautiful or fair
Is but thine own reflection there.

A NOBLE SCHOOL-BOY.

MASTER WALTERS had been much annoyed by the whistling of some of his scholars in school. Whenever he called a boy to account for such a disturbance, the plea made was that it was unintentional—"he forgot all about where he was." This became so frequent that the master threatened a severe punishment to the next offender.

The next day, when the room was unusually quiet, a loud, sharp whistle broke the stillness. Several scholars asserted that it was a certain boy who had the reputation of a mischief-maker and a liar. He was called up, and though, with a somewhat stubborn look, he denied it again and again, commanded to hold out his hand.

At this instant a little slender fellow not more than seven years old, and with a very pale and decided face, rushed forward and reached out his hand, saying, as he did so,

"Mr. Walters, sir, do not punish him. I whistled. I was doing a hard sum, and in rubbing out another rubbed it out by mistake and spoiled it all, and before I thought whistled right out. I was very much afraid, but I could not sit there and act a lie when I knew who was to blame. You may ferule me, sir, as you said you should."

And with all the firmness he could command, he again held out the little hand, never for a moment doubting that he was to be punished. Mr. Walters was much affected.

"Charles," said he, looking at the erect form of the delicate child, who had made such a conquest over his natural timidity, "I would not strike you a blow for the world. I cannot doubt that you speak the truth; you did not mean to whistle, my son. You have acted nobly and wisely."

The boy went back to his seat with a flushed face, and quietly went on with his sums. He must have felt that every eye was upon him in admiration, for the smallest scholar could appreciate the moral courage of such an action.

HOW TO KNOW A GOOSE.

"MOTHER, mother!" cried a young crow, returning hurriedly from its first flight, "I'm so frightened; I've seen such a sight!"

"What sight, my son?" asked the old rook.

"Oh, white creatures, screaming, and running, and straining their necks, and holding their heads ever so high. See, mother, there they go!"

"Geese, my son, merely geese," calmly replied the parent bird, looking over the common. "Through life, child, observe that when you meet any one who makes a great fuss about himself, and tries to lift his head higher than the rest of the world, you may set him down at once as a goose."

For want of a nail, a shoe was lost,
For want of a shoe, a horse was lost,
For want of the horse, the rider was lost,
And all for the want of a horseshoe nail!

THE STICKLEBACK.

THE STICKLEBACK.

By Mrs. Anna T. Randall Diehl.

THIS queer fish builds a nest for the protection of its eggs. Its house is not strong and compact like that of a bird, but is only a loose bundle which, though suited to the purpose intended, falls to pieces as soon as it is taken from the water.

He is not very particular about the kind of material of which it is made. It may be seaweed, leaves which have dropped into the stream, a coil of thread, a tuft of wool, anything which can be gathered about a stick, a branch of coral or almost any stationary thing.

A rope was once dangling for a long time deep in the water; and when drawn to the surface, it was found that a stickleback's nest had been made among the unstranded fibres. When a pair of these fish select a spot where they wish to set up housekeeping, one makes the nest while the other guards the premises, and woe to the fish who ventures within the limits. Though he be ten times the size, the brave stickleback makes such a furious attack with his stout jaws and sharp spines that the intruder is soon glad to retreat.

He seems to be made for fighting, for, while his weapons are effective, his body is protected by shield-like plates, like the cuirass of a warrior of the olden time.

IT is better to sow the young heart with good thoughts than a field with corn, since the heart's harvest is never ending.

KINDLY JEM.

By Ada M. Kennicott.

ONE day Jem had leave to gather blueberries. He had to go a long ways for them, so he rose early in the morning, and as soon as breakfast was over his mother put some bread and butter and cold boiled eggs into a tin pail for his dinner, and he started merrily off. He had not gone far when he saw a tiny gosling lying in the wagon-track, and seeming quite forlorn and helpless.

"See here, my fine fellow!" cried he; "what is the matter with you?"

The gosling looked up at him, but only replied, "Squeak! squeak!"

"A pretty story, that!" said Jem; "but as it seems we can't talk together, I'll help you what I can, without."

So he took up the poor little creature, and carried it in his arms till he came to a farm-house, where a little girl, who was standing by the gate, claimed it for hers.

"But," said she, "I have a lame foot, and could not go to look for it. I am so glad it is found, and I thank you so much! What can I do for you?"

"Oh, help some other poor creature, some time," replied Jem, and went whistling on his way.

Soon he came to a wood, rustling with green, cool leaves, and so full of sweet flowers and gay birds that he thought, surely, here could be no trouble for him to aid, nothing but enjoyment. But toward the end of it, hearing a great screaming and fluttering, and looking about for the cause, he saw a large com-

pany of birds gathered around a thorn-bush.

"Heigh ho!" cried he; "what ails you, my friends?"

The birds screamed and fluttered all the more when he came near, for fear of him, but he soon saw that a poor young robin, trying to fly down from the tree, had got caught among the prickly bushes. He helped it out, and then ran off without waiting for Redbreast's song of thanks.

As he neared another farm-house he heard a desolate "Peep! peep!" which made him look about him. Again he heard "Peep! peep! peep!" and by following the sound, after much careful searching, he found a tiny chicken that had strayed from its mother and wandered about till it was tired nearly to death. Its poor wings drooped, and it had nestled down in the grass to die.

"You should not give up so, little one," said Jem; "Madam Hen is somewhere about, I'll be bound."

So he took the chick up carefully, and sat still, with his head near the ground. Presently he heard very faintly, "Cluck, cluck, cluck, cluck, cluck!" Then he followed the sound till he found an old brown hen with a fine flock of chicks. He put his little stray down on the ground near her, and oh how it brightened up, and flew about after her with such a happy twitter! Jem waited to see that she did not peck it, so as to be sure he had the right hen, and then went back to the road.

Next, he had to cross a pasture lot where was a large flock of sheep. Soon he saw one of them butting a lamb most furiously, and ran to find out the reason, which, indeed, was quite plain. The poor wee thing had got lost from its mother, and was tiring itself out by running about after all the old sheep, for it could not tell the right one, and getting sorely butted in the bargain.

"I've too much business on hand this morning," sighed Jem. "Truly, Uncle Jack was right when he said that no one who kept his eyes and ears open could want for a chance to do good to somebody or something."

Nevertheless, he took the lamb about all over the large field till he found its mother, and felt well paid for his trouble when he saw how happy it seemed. But when he regained the road, he felt that the morning was passing very fast. The sun had climbed a great way up his blue pathway, the sky, and was getting quite warm and fierce in his efforts to reach the noon-mark; the dew was all off the grass, and Jem feared he should not reach the whortleberry swamp till noon. For a time he proceeded without further adventure; but at length, just as he was in the midst of a calculation as to how many quarts of berries he could pick in three hours, and how much money they would bring him at ten cents a quart, he heard a great growling and squealing, and looking down the road, saw a large dog chasing a pig. The pig was running this way and that, its ears hanging bloody and torn from the bites of the dog. Jem picked up a stone and ran to throw it at the dog.

"See here, sir!" cried he; "aren't you

ashamed of yourself, to bite a poor pig in that way, when he's only going along the road, too, and harming nobody?"

"You'd better look out for yourself," shouted an angry voice, "and mind your own business! I set that dog on the pig myself."

"And may I ask what for, sir?"

"Why, for fun, of course, just to see him run," replied the boy; for the speaker was a boy, though older and larger than our friend.

"Then you're the one that ought to be ashamed, instead of the dog," replied Jem, quietly, "that is all I have to say."

"That will do very well," said the boy; "it's quite enough for the present. But what difference does it make to you, I should be pleased to know? It's no pig of yours."

"Very true," replied Jem; "but my uncle Jack used to tell me that the same God who made this great world, and the sky, and the sun, and us, made the animals and insects to enjoy themselves, too, that He keeps them and cares for them just the same as for us. He is kind to us, you know, and gives us friends, and keeps us from harm and danger all the days and nights, and helps us if we are in trouble; and if we do not do the same by them, He is displeased with us, because He wishes them to be happy too.

"Well, maybe you are right," answered the boy; "at any rate, Rover, you've had sport enough for this time; so come along, old fellow;" and with a whistle to his dog, he sprang over the fence, and was soon out of sight.

Jem looked back to see the pig quietly eating grass, and went on. At length he came in sight of some tall trees, which he thought must grow in the whortleberry swamp, and, as he was very tired and hungry, sat down under an oak tree by the roadside to eat his dinner. Scarcely, however, had he broken the shell from an egg, and spread the clean paper of salt upon his lap, when, looking up, he beheld coming slowly toward him a very feeble old man, leaning heavily upon his cane as he tottered along. Jem gave him his nice place in the shade, and seating himself upon the grass near by, began to eat his dinner, but the old man looked at it so wistfully that Jem offered him a piece of the bread and butter.

"Thank you kindly, my young sir," said he as he took it. "I've had nothing to eat since yesterday noon."

Jem looked at his basket. It seemed more tempting than ever in the light of a new resolve, for he was hungry too, and it would be a long time before he could get his supper. Might he not keep one little piece? "But no," thought he; "this old man is hungrier than I, and may not get any supper;" so, with a pleasant smile, he placed it all upon the flat stone beside this new object of his ever-ready sympathy.

"Would you give me all your dinner?" said the man, in surprise, "and I, a poor, ragged stranger! No, no! I cannot take it, my young friend."

"Oh, it is no such great matter to me," replied Jem, cheerily; "you need it more than I, and may have to wait longer for

your next meal; besides, I can get plenty of berries to eat in the swamp."

"May the Lord repay you!" said the old man, "for I cannot, save with my blessing; but, after all, it is no small thing to have the grateful prayers of the hungry whom you have fed. 'The blessing of the poor it maketh rich.'"

"I want no better pay," answered Jem as with a "good-bye" he took the foot-path which led to the swamp. This, however, proved farther away than he had expected; and when at last he reached it, he was obliged to sit down and rest. "Ah!" sighed he, "this is a poor beginning for my day's work. I shall hardly get my basket full and be home by sundown; but, heigh ho! what a fine song!" he cried as a little robin lit on one of the tall bushes and began singing away as if his heart was so full of joy that he could not keep still.

"Are you the same fellow that I helped out of trouble this morning? I believe you are the very same, speckled breast and all, come to give me thanks, and say you are sorry that you helped make me late. Well, never mind; we'll have a good time yet. You shall sing while I gather berries, and who knows but we may fill the basket, after all?"

The bird seemed noways frightened at Jem's long speech, but hopped along the ground on its straight, stiff little legs, and dove so eagerly after the bugs and worms that lay hidden in the grass that our friend laughed in spite of his hunger and weariness.

"You mean to fill yours, at least," he said, "and set a good example for an idle fellow like me."

Whether or not the robin was the same Jem had helped, he liked to fancy so. It stayed by him for some time, cheering him by its songs and odd, busy ways. There were not many blueberries here—indeed, they were mostly red berries, and unfit for eating; so, when Redbreast flew away, the boy pushed farther into the swamp, where they grew thickly, and soon he could no longer see the bottom of the basket for the rich, blue-black clusters. Then he began in fancy to dispose of them. These he would give to his mother, but next day, if he could get leave, he would come again with a larger basket—yes, and bring this one, too, and fill them both with berries, which he would take to town and exchange for something very nice. What should it be? A new calico dress for his mother, or a pair of shoes for himself to wear to Sunday-school?

The dress, of course, for only last Sunday his mother stayed home from church for want of one, and he could go barefoot till he earned the shoes in some other way. Very busy and very happy was Jem, thinking how much money he would be able to earn as he grew older, and how, some day, he might have enough to keep his mother in a nice house, with neat calico dresses for every-day wear, and a silk one for Sundays, pushing on through the thick bushes to pick the great berry-clusters, never noticing that clouds were sailing up, full of big drops that were getting ready to come down and moisten the hot, dry earth. But at length he heard the

thunder speaking, "yet a great way off," telling of the work that must be done in filling up the brooks and rivers, and washing the grass-blades, leaves and corn-stalks, and saw that the clouds were shutting away the sunbeams, so that the air was cool and fresh, and that it was growing quite dark. Jem cast a sorrowful glance at his basket not yet full.

"We must be going, friend," said he; "but if it does not cloud too fast, I'll pick by the way. Here is a nice path; and if it does rain, why, the blueberries and I will get ourselves well washed, I suppose."

But the path did not come to the wood as soon as he thought it would, and the clouds grew blacker and blacker. At last he found an open space, covered with soft, thick grass, and with bushes growing thickly about it. This, he judged, must be near the wood; but the storm came up so fast, with such a strong wind, that he thought best to stop there. So he bent the bushes around, making quite a close shelter, and then crept into his leafy house to wait till the storm should be over. I dare say some boys would have been sadly frightened at thought of being alone in the woods during a thunder-storm, but Jem had been better taught. The rain spoke to him of God's love as well as the sunshine. He knew that all the trees and plants and flowers and fields had been thirsting for it a long time, that the little brooks would once more go singing over the pebbles, and there would now be water enough to turn the mill-wheel, which had so long stood idle. So, though he would, no doubt, much rather have been at home in his snug chamber under the rafters, where he knew the rain-drops made soft, cooing music on the roof, yet he was not afraid, even when the sky grew dark, and the thunder crashed heavily, and the air was pierced by the red tongues of the lightning, but closed his eyes and thought of the sweet words he had learned at Sunday-school:

"Him no danger e'er can harm
Who lies cradled on Thine arm."

Down came the shower, swift and blinding, with a noise like the rush of mighty wings, and even in his leafy shelter our friend was drenched with rain. By and by, however, the drops fell slower and slower, then ceased entirely; the clouds broke away, and the sun shone forth in a flood of glory. But it was quite low, would soon be below the hills, and Jem was far from home; so he hastened away without stopping, as was his wont, to hear the bursts of music with which the birds were greeting the sunset.

Nevertheless, the stars were throbbing in the sky and the twilight shades were folded closely down over the earth when he gained the road. The way, as he passed the mile-marks, seemed to grow longer instead of shorter, for he was getting all the time more weary and hungry. At last, just as it seemed to him he could go no farther, he espied the light in the cottage window. Joy lent him new strength, and even quickened his footsteps, as he passed the familiar waymarks, till, ere long, he had reached his humble but cheerful

home, and returned his mother's joyful greeting. Their plain supper of white bread and fresh milk was sauced with Jem's well-earned blueberries; and after this and their simple devotions, he gladly sought his little couch, that seemed softer than ever before to his tired limbs.

As he slept he dreamed — changeful dreams, some bright, some troubled. All the creatures he had seen that day seemed to gather around him. There were lambs with long necklaces of great red whortleberries that got tangled about his feet and tripped him up, so that he fell headlong over two old men with crutches, and spilled all the berries from his basket. Then he was alone in the woods, and great fierce dogs chased him, while he could not run at all for flocks of chickens that kept getting in his way, till at last a drove of pigs chased the dogs away, at which he did not feel at all surprised. One never is surprised, you know, at the most unnatural things happening in dreams. At length he saw a gray cloud which grew white and clear, till it parted in the centre, showing a most lovely woman. Her face was that of the girl at the farm-house gate, only far more beautiful than any he had ever seen before. She held out to him a little box upon which was written in blue and silver letters, "The Reward of Kindness." As he took it he heard the sound of sweet music, and looking about him, saw that it came from a company of robins singing in the trees beside him; but the red of their breasts seemed turned to pure gold, and their wings were flashing with gems brighter than dewdrops in the sunlight. He turned to open his box, when suddenly a great light almost blinded him; and putting up his hands to shade his eyes, he awoke. The moon was shining softly in at the window, and he lay a long time awake, thinking of the dream-lady, and wishing he could have seen what was in the box before waking.

At last he slept again, and only woke when the sun was far up in the sky, and the birds had left off singing for the more prosy work of hunting their breakfasts. He was too lame and ill, from the cold he had taken, to rise either that day or the next. The third morning he was surprised, on going to the window, to see the carriage of their most wealthy neighbor standing at the gate, and still more so when his mother told him, with a more cheerful look than she had worn since his father's death, that he was wanted below. Mr. Burns had with him a happy-looking, neatly-dressed old gentleman who claimed to be the one to whom Jem had given all his dinner two days before.

"And," said Mr. Burns, "he is my father. Having a good situation, and not liking change, he remained in the old country, while I came to the new. But lately there were sad fortunes for him, and he set off without writing to find me. It was a long journey across the sea for one so feeble, and soon after landing he lost all his money, so he was forced to beg his bread, and hardly would he have reached me but for your kindness, and I have, from all who know you, the good account I expected from that act.

"Your friend who owns the large dog,"

continued he, with a smile, "tells me you have a great regard for the welfare of animals. Now, I have many sheep and cattle, besides various sorts of poultry, and every year I lose great numbers from the carelessness of those who tend them. I am sure you would care well for them; and if you will take that place, you shall have eight dollars a month, besides a good home, and every spring six fine lambs from the flock. Your mother has promised to come, too, and mind the dairy and farm-house."

Jem was almost too happy to speak. His fondest hopes were realized. Here was the nice home for his mother and the work for himself. And here we will leave him, only saying that the kindness of heart which had won him friends never failed to keep them, neither did he ever forget that all our good gifts are from God.

HOW JOHN MADE IT UP.

HE had failed somewhere, in study or deportment, I cannot remember which, and his teacher told him he must stay after school. When the other scholars were dismissed, John seized a moment when the teacher's back was turned, and slid out of the door. She called after him to come back, but he pretended not to hear, and ran away. It was a 'cute trick, he thought, and he bragged over it a little to the other boys; but he did not go to school the next day nor the next. He did not feel like it, he said.

At last he made his appearance again; but instead of the punishment he expected, his teacher, who was giving out the subjects for essays that day, only told him to "write a composition about obedience." John took her meaning at once, and sat scratching his head and puzzling over his composition about half a day. Finally he handed in the following, which is an actual copy of John's composition:

"When won tells won to do a thing, and he does it, it is called obeying, and when won tells won to do a thing, and he don't do it, it is called disobeying. And when a man or woman tells a boy or a girl to do a thing, and he don't do it, it is called disobeying, and when a teacher tells a boy to do a thing, and he does it, it is called obeying, and when a teacher tells a boy to do a thing, and he don't do it, it is called disobeying. The boy's name was John, and he did not obey his teacher, and when she called him back, he did hear her, and he will never do it again."

The teacher was satisfied.

BERTIE'S ESCAPE.

A TRUE STORY.

By Mrs. M. O. Johnson.

"BERTIE, boy, want to ride down to the cars with papa?"

It was a beautiful summer morning. Bertie's eyes sparkled, and his tongue ran merrily as a little brook all the while his mamma was dressing him. She put on his pretty blue plaid dress and white coat, and the little straw hat trimmed

with blue ribbon, with the drooping feather just shading his white forehead. How pretty he looked, with his rosy cheeks and shining eyes, blue as the summer sky!

Papa took him in his arms and lifted him into the carryall. Joe, the hired man, went too, to drive home, for Mr. Dickson was going to Boston for the day.

Little thought mamma as she kissed her darling good-bye, and stood in the porch in the sweet summer air and sunshine, watching them down the road—little thought she what peril the next hour would bring.

How Bertie enjoyed that ride! He chattered like a monkey, and was as full of glee as the singing birds.

Bay Charlie pricked up his ears and trotted faster as they approached the station; but they were in good season, and the train was not as yet in sight or hearing.

With a kiss and "Good-bye, Bertie; be a good boy, and mind mamma," papa sprang out, never thinking but that Joe would, as usual, turn directly around and drive home.

But Joe wanted to do an errand, or to speak to some one he knew, and intending to be away only a moment, threw the reins over the dasher, and left little Bertie sitting in the carryall. The horse was gentle, and used to stand without tying.

But the train came in sight, and the terrified horse started into a run, bearing down directly toward the track.

Poor little Bertie! The engine was close at hand, sweeping on in its terrible power, and in another instant where would the frail little life be? Who could save him?

But help was near. The angel of deliverance came swiftly, not on silver wings or clad in white, cloud-like garments, but booted and coated, with quick foot and strong arm and heroic heart.

A young man, hastening down the hill to catch the train, saw the child's danger, and giving not an instant's thought to his own imperiled life, redoubled his speed, sprang into the carriage on his knees, and grasping the reins with a vigorous hand, succeeded, on the very verge of the track, in turning the horse one side.

Then, quietly as if the deed of generous purpose and high courage were an every-day affair, he went on his way to his daily business, and the little child was given back to his mother's arms, not a hair of his golden head harmed.

MORNING MUSIC.

TWO little hens in our farm-yard
Awoke with the early morn;
And they chirped "Good-day!" as they bustled about
In the light of the rosy dawn.
While the turkeys gobbled, the ducks went "quack!
Here's the bright and beautiful sun come back!"

Two little children, rosy and red,
Were playing an early tune on the bed—
"Rub-a-dub dub" and "toot-toot-toot,"
On a fine new drum and a very long flute.
Birdies without, and bairnies within,
Never was heard such a musical din.

THE WIDOW.

See page 154.

THE WIDOW.

By Aunt Lizzie.

THE woman we see in the picture looks very sad, and we know she is a widow by the cap she wears. My little readers do not understand this, I know, because they never see widows with caps on unless they are old ladies and with gray hair. And this lady is neither old nor gray. But in England—which you all know is a country, or rather an island, on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean—a widow, no matter how young she may be, always wears a white cap. I think it is both an uncomfortable and a foolish fashion, and I am glad it is not followed here.

As this woman is not dressed all in black, I think she must have been a widow a good while—almost long enough to lay aside the cap. Still, she looks very sorrowful, and no doubt she is thinking of the happy days before her husband died. I wonder if she has any children? I think she must have one boy at least, for I see she is knitting a good strong stocking which can be for nobody but a boy of ten or twelve. I hope he is good and kind to her, and a comfort to her in all her troubles.

I wonder if all boys know how much comfort they might prove to their mothers, whether those mothers are widows or not? Do they know how they delight in brave, manly boys whose bravery and manliness are of the true sort, and who would scorn to do a mean action? Do they know how any kindness and gentleness toward their mothers touches their mothers' hearts, and fills them with gratitude and thankfulness? Boys, be kind to your mothers, and try to become such men as they will always regard and speak of with pride and love.

CHARLIE FRY'S FOURTH OF JULY.

By Mrs. B. C. Rude.

THUNDER, clatter, snap, bang! and little Charlie Fry turned uneasily upon his bed, opened his eyes, and found that it was the glorious Fourth of July, and that the men and boys were already upon the streets making merry.

He drew a sigh, then, closing his eyes, folded his emaciated hands and offered his morning prayer. There was a little watcher sitting near, but Charlie did not know it. And so, from the fullness of his sad heart, he said quite audibly,

"I can't go out to-day, Lord, like the other little boys, but help me to be thankful that I am so comfortable, and give to dear Harry and the boys a happy time."

After he had finished his prayer, a cheery voice said, "Good-morning, Charlie;" and oh how radiant was Charlie's face as he answered, before he got fairly turned, so he could see,

"Harry Gray, my dear Harry, how could you think of me this morning, when there is so much fun outside?"

"Oh," said Harry, "do you think I could enjoy myself anywhere better than here? You see the guns at daybreak awoke me, and I jumped right out and

dressed myself and went over to the meadow lot, and got you these, Charlie;" and he held up six long grasses strung full of strawberries, and still held one hand behind him.

"Oh," said Charlie, "God will repay you for all your kindnesses to me, but I never shall, I'm such a helpless creature, Harry. But what have you in that other hand? Something for me, I know."

"Only a hat, Charlie—a nice summer hat like mine for you to wear when you go out again in your cart."

"Harry, do you think that will ever be?" and Charlie reached out his little thin hand; and Harry, grasping it, whispered,

"I hope so, Charlie; but God knows best, mother says."

"Yes, Harry, I know it all; but people are so kind to me here that sometimes I want to stay, and then, when my poor crippled limbs are drawn up with pain, I say, 'Lord, take me now if it be Thy will.' But oh, when I get easier, I want to stay again. Could I leave you, Harry, and all the rest?"

"Yes, Charlie, to be with Jesus;" and the brave little fellow held Charlie's hand with a firm grasp, and only let one tear fall on the coverlid.

Presently Mrs. Fry came in with Charlie's breakfast, saying,

"Here is a nice piece of toast, dear, and a nice fish that Harry caught for you at daybreak, long before you were awake."

"Oh dear, mother! what would we do if it were not for Harry?" said the thankful boy. "Just look at these berries, mother; and think of his going a-fishing too, and this the Fourth of July."

Mrs. Fry silently patted both of the boys and went out.

While Charlie was eating his breakfast, he said,

"Now, Harry, I want you to go out and have a good time to-day. You must not spend your time with me. The Fourth won't come to you but once this year."

Harry's quick reply was,

"It won't come but once to you, either, Charlie. And I mean you shall have all the fun you can endure without its hurting you. The fantastics have promised to come on this road, and your mother and I are going to fix you so you can see."

"Oh dear, Harry! You're all so good. Will they halt at the gate?"

"Yes. I know the leader, Bill Tanner, and I'll have them halt, if you'll only rest all you can between times. I don't want you to tire yourself out with them, for I am going to keep you awake longer than usual to-night."

"Oh, Harry, does that mean fireworks?" and the meek little fellow began to cry.

Harry told him in a half-frightened way that he was going to spoil all the fun if he did so, that he had better rest a little now. So the exhausted Charlie fell asleep, and Harry went into the back yard, where an eager crowd of little boys stood squinting at a mysterious-looking box that had been dumped there by Mrs. Gray's cartman, directed, "Master Charlie Fry."

At their urgent request, Harry opened the box, and displayed before their astonished eyes a fine assortment of fireworks, which he told them were to be sent up that night in front of Mr. Fry's house, so Charlie could see. Of course every boy teased for a bunch of fire-crackers, and by way of coaxing them into silence for the evening performance, Harry said, with a pleasant smile on his face,

"Now, if every boy of you will promise not to hurrah once to-night, but'll stand stock-still on Charlie's account, and if you'll take your fire-crackers away over the hill, where it won't wake Charley, you may each have a bunch of fire-crackers now."

In five minutes more ten pairs of bare feet were scampering down the road, and ten ragged chip hats were waving a hearty "hurrah" that nobody dared to utter out loud. Soon after could be heard distinctly from where Harry stood, crack! crack! snap! snap! bang! hurrah! whoop!

Harry himself never even snapped a torpedo all day; and when his mother asked him why he did not, he said it was a waste of powder, when Charlie couldn't hear and enjoy it with him. And this was that selfish Harry Gray of whom I told you in the January number!

Just before it was time for the fantastics to go by, Harry was at Charlie's bedside, helping Mrs. Fry to prop him up, so that he might rest very comfortably, while he was sight-seeing.

The fantastics halted at the gate, bowed and scraped, and some of them danced and cut up all sorts of antics. Their odd faces made Charlie laugh. And when a funny little boy jumped off from an old dray cart, and ran about among his crew with his hat in his hand, Charlie was surprised to see them tumble oranges and lemons and apples and picture-books and jack-knives into it, but he was still more surprised when the little fellow ran in at the gate and tumbled the contents of the old hat in at the bedroom window, saying, "Them's for the sick boy, mum." Of course Charlie cried just a little. The crowd passed on, the room was darkened, and for two full hours Charlie slept.

That night they had as brilliant a display of fireworks in front of Mr. Fry's plain little wood-colored house as there was before the finest mansion in all ———.

There were sky-rockets and Roman candles in abundance, and even a revolving wheel that shot out stars and balls of fire, and unwound ribbons of light; and all at once there were these words written in letters of fire in the centre of the wheel: "Charlie Fry's Fourth of July." The wheel stood still full three minutes, till all could read, and then there was a whirl, a splutter and a pop, pop, pop! and there was nothing to be seen of that piece but a hundred fireballs coming down from among the far-away clouds.

After all was over the crowd that had gathered quietly dispersed.

Charlie simply said, as his mother wheeled his bed back from the window and laid him tenderly down for the night,

"How happy I am, mamma! God is good. Where is Harry?"

"Here I am;" and Harry took the tired little hand in his.

Mrs. Fry removed the light to the kitchen; the sleepy children crept softly to bed, and the invalid fell asleep.

Harry then laid the little hand under the sheet, kissed the sleeper and went home, where he met father and mother waiting for him at the gate. As he went up the walk between them, with his two hands in theirs, he said, proudly,

"Wasn't it grand, papa, mamma?"

"Yes, child, and may God bless our boy, our noble boy."

So Harry Gray was happy, for he knew that he had the approval of father, mother, God and the angels, and that he had lessened one day's pain for poor crippled Charlie Fry.

A YOUNG POSTMASTER'S HONESTY.

THE way to make sure of returning property entrusted to us any time it is called for is never to use or meddle with it.

Abraham Lincoln was once postmaster in the small village of New Salem, "out West." He then went to Springfield to study law, and for years had hard work to earn his bread and butter. Fighting with poverty is a hard fight. One day a post-office agent came round to collect a balance due to the Washington office from the New Salem office. The bill was seventeen dollars and sixty cents. Dr. Henry, a friend of "poor Abe," happened to fall in with the agent, and was as sure as could be that he had nothing in his pocket to pay it with. He went, therefore, to the office in order to lend him the money, or offer to lend it.

When the agent presented the draft, Lincoln asked the man to sit down, and sat down himself with a very puzzled look upon his face. He then stepped out, went over to his boarding-house, and came back with an old stocking under his arm. This he untied, and poured out upon the table a quantity of silver coin and "red cents." These they counted, exactly seventeen dollars and sixty cents, just the amount called for; and, moreover, it was the very money called for, for on leaving the office the young postmaster tied up the money and had kept it by him, awaiting the legal call to give it up.

On paying it over, he said, "I never use, even for a time, any money that is not mine. This money I knew belonged to the government, and I had no right to exchange or use it for any purpose of my own."

A POLITE DOG.

TRIP is a little terrier, with a black coat and a white collar. Like "Old Dog Tray," he is "ever faithful," and his sympathy for any one who seems to be suffering is touching.

Sometimes, when grandpa has a hard turn of coughing, he will stand beside him and cry like a child.

He has a very uncanine fondness for kittens. One day a family of young kit-

tens was found in the cellar. Trip was delighted, and immediately constituted himself their chief guardian. When he felt like having a frolic, he would toss and tumble them as a cat does a mouse, and the kittens seemed to think it fine sport.

Trip is always delighted to see his friends, and when asked to shake hands will put out his white paw as gracefully as any city belle.

But his real politeness shows itself in another and better way. His favorite place for a nap is in grandpa's easy-chair. There he will curl himself up on the leather-covered cushion, and take more comfort than a king on a bed of down. But at the first sound of grandpa's step he is wide awake. Up go the pretty black ears, and in an instant he is on his feet, looking at his master, as much as to say, "Will you have the chair, sir?"

If grandpa says, "No, I thank you," he goes back and settles himself for another nap; but if grandpa seems inclined to sit down, the little dog at once retires.

CHARLIE'S FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL.

By Mrs. L. M. Bowles.

ONE lovely morning, years ago, three children might have been seen hurrying toward the schoolhouse in the village of Milton. The eldest, a motherly little woman of nine, was trying to lead curly-headed Charlie, the four-year pet of the family, decorously along. This was the first day he had been allowed to go to school, and he could not walk quietly, but must dance along from one side of the road to the other; and besides, he felt that a boy of his age and size, with boots and two pockets, was able to go without being led. So as often as Katie seized the chubby hand he drew it away, and went on feeling very manly indeed.

If when years have passed, honors and offices of trust are given him, he cannot feel more proud and happy than now, and he was blithe as the birds and bees that sung so sweetly in the sunshine of that pleasant morning.

Soon Charlie was seated by Katie's side and school had begun. Something very like tears stood in the brown eyes, for his dignity had been sorely wounded. Katie, regardless of his age and manliness, had snatched him up, and put him down on the seat, as he said indignantly to himself, "just as if he was a baby."

But he forgot the trouble soon, and listened while each of the older scholars read a few verses in the Testament; and when they all rose and repeated "Our Father who art in heaven," etc., he rose too; and when they were through, he stood up still, with his little hands clasped, his eyes closed, and said slowly, "Now I lay me down to sleep," just as he did every night, when the others said "Our Father," at his mother's knee.

Katie felt quite scandalized at this variation of the usual exercises, but Miss Gray, the teacher, kissed his white forehead and whispered, "Bless the darling!" with a tear in her eye.

Time wore on; and Charlie went out to

read his letters, and he learned O and S, so he could find them anywhere, and Miss Gray told him how to spell "boy," which he was to tell his mother at night. Wasn't he proud and happy then, and didn't the cheeks glow and the brown eyes shine? How astonished mamma would be!

With a proud step he went back to his seat, and sat down so quickly Katie had no time to help him, and his peace was undisturbed. But a thought came into the curly head; and forgetting that he must not speak aloud in school, he called out,

"Oh, Katie, she didn't ask me who was in the lion's den, nor who built the ark! Mamma said she would."

Horrified Katie gave him a little shake and laid her finger on her prim mouth to silence him, and he sat abashed and quiet till recess. Before noon he grew restless again, and found it a relief when school was out, for keeping still was hard work for the restless little body.

At noon groups of children gathered about him to ask questions and hear his answers. One shy little miss of five stole up, and taking a curl in her hand, whispered, "You've got nice curls, you have."

One of the girls asked him his name, and very promptly came the answer:

"Charles Humphrey Dayton, but father says I'm 'pa's man and mamma's blessing.'"

Clara Peters gave him the rosiest apple, and Nellie Clark gave him half her candy heart. Didn't he enjoy it all? and then they went out to play "pull away," and his laugh rang out merrily when he caught a great boy and held him, though he struggled hard to get away. The others praised his courage and his strength till his little heart was full of happiness and his eyes glittered like jewels.

The afternoon came and went, giving him a chance to tell of Daniel among the lions, how Noah built the ark and Zachery Taylor was President. Then, when school was done, and Miss Gray kissed him, asking him to come to-morrow and telling him he had been a little man, he felt as if his heart could hold no more pleasure that day.

All this was years ago, but last night I went to hear him lecture on temperance at our town-hall. His eyes were as bright and his voice as earnest as of old as he spoke of the evil of strong drink and the woe it brought to hearts and homes. And I—well, I am an old woman now, but I shall never forget his sweet face as he said, "Now I lay me," that morning of his "first day at school."

DON'T WAKE THE BABY.

BABY sleeps, so we must tread
Softly round her little bed,
And be careful that our toys
Do not fall and make a noise.

Play and talk, but whisper low;
Mother wants to work, we know,
That when father comes to tea
All may neat and cheerful be.

GLOW-WORMS.—WINGED MALES AND WINGLESS FEMALES.

LIGHT-GIVING INSECTS.

By Uncle John.

I HARDLY need to tell my little readers that there are insects which have the power of giving out light. They all, I do not doubt, have seen in the cool, damp evenings of June the bright flashes of the "lightning-bugs" as they darted here and there through the air, looking like tiny flying stars. Many of my little boy readers, I fear, have even been so thoughtless as to catch and hurt these harmless insects. I hope, however, none of them have thought how cruel they were in doing this. I also hope that they will remember that these little lightning-bugs are great friends of the farmer and the fruit-grower. They feed on the young of many kinds of harmful insects, and are especially useful in helping to keep down the curculio beetles, those terrible little destroyers of our plums and peaches and apples and cherries.

Very much like our "lightning-bugs" are the glow-worms of Europe. The female of the glow-worm, however, has no wings. Nor is the light of the male so bright as that of the female. The female glow-worms are long, flat, soft worm-like creatures, shining with a pale, steady greenish light. At times this light gets brighter

and brighter till it glows like iron heated to a white heat. In Italy there is a sort of glow-worm in which both the males and females have wings. Like our lightning-bugs, they appear in great numbers, and the lawns are covered with them. The young of the glow-worm feed on small snails, hiding in the shell after eating up its owner. The glow-worm always puts out her light between eleven and twelve o'clock, shining no more for the rest of the night. We have in the Middle States of this country a species of glow-worm, This is the female of a sort of beetle called the photuris, or light-tail.

The most brilliant light-giving insects are found in the West Indies, in Mexico and in South America. They are the real fire-flies, and are not very closely related to our lightning-bugs. They are a sort of first cousins to the snapping-bugs, which many of my little friends in the country have probably seen.

One of the most brilliant of these fire-flies is known to men of science by a long name in Greek and Latin which means "night-shining fire-bearer." It gives light enough to enable a person to read quite fine print. It is very common in Brazil, in Cuba and in Mexico. It is about two inches long, and of a dark-brown color. It has two large eye-like shining spots on the sides of the breast. There are also two bright patches hidden under the wings, which one does not see unless the insect is flying, when it appears adorned with four brilliant gems of the most beautiful golden blue lustre. In fact, the whole body is full of light. We are told that the people living on the West Indian islands when they were first discovered were in the habit of using these living lamps in the place of candles. In traveling by night they would fasten one to each toe, and in fishing and hunting they needed no other light. They made great pets of them, and did all they could to get them to come into their sleeping-rooms, in order to drive away or destroy the musquitoes.

The Creole women use these fire-flies as jewels. After being caught they are shut up in cages of very fine wire and fed on pieces of sugar-cane. When the ladies wish to adorn themselves with these living diamonds, they place them in little bags of lace, which they arrange tastefully on the skirts of their dress. They also have a way of fastening them in their hair without hurting them. Sometimes they imprison them in gauze, which they twist around their necks like necklaces or roll about their waists in a girdle of fire. They go to the ball, says one writer, under a diadem of living topazes, of animated emeralds, and this diadem blazes or pales according as the insect is fresh or fatigued. When the ladies return home, they give the little insects a bath, which refreshes them, and put them back again into the cage.

A GOOD RESOLUTION.

I WILL not willingly offend,
Nor be easily offended;
What is wrong I'll try to mend,
And endure what can't be mended.

GERTIE GRAHAM'S EXPERIENCE.

By G. de B.

GERTIE GRAHAM was a sweet, lovable little girl—one everybody felt drawn toward at once on seeing her; but with all her attractions, she had one grave little fault that marred the many beauties and virtues she possessed.

It was this: She did not like to mind when first spoken to, but would have to be told over and over so many times to do this or do that that it was fast making her a disagreeable and unlovely little girl.

"Come, dollie dear, it is bedtime," her mamma would call to her from the head of the stairs when the clock struck eight. Gertie would answer, "Wait a minute," and go on playing with her blocks or cards.

Presently mamma would call down again, "Gertie, come right up stairs to bed; I cannot wait any longer for you."

"But, mamma, can't I finish my game first?" Gertie would reply, petulantly, making no offer to stir.

"No, come directly."

"But, mamma, I want to;" and still the little feet would not go.

"Gertie, I shall have to punish you if you do not obey me immediately," mamma would call down after a few moments more. Then perhaps Gertie would make an effort to begin to obey by going round the sitting-room to each one who was endeavoring to read the evening papers through all the noise, and kissing them good-night over and over again, making as long a delay as she possibly could by that means, until one more impatient call from mamma would finally send her up stairs. And just so in many other things. If grandma asked her not to make a noise when her head ached, or told her to stop teasing baby, Gertie would heedlessly go on with her racket and worry, not seeming to hear kind grandma's request; and when grandpa even sometimes spoke to her in his gentle way, she would pay but little attention, and continue doing what she had been told to cease.

She did not willfully mean to be naughty, but she had gotten into the habit of not minding at the first word, and it was growing into naughtiness.

It was a very grave fault, and one that made her mamma feel very sorrowful to see, for a little girl who will not obey those who are nearest and dearest to her in all the world will be apt to grow up into a woman for whom nobody will care.

Her mamma finally decided she would teach and punish her by other means than whippings and scoldings, and said to her one day: "Gertie, you must learn to mind me when I first speak, or bear it in mind, you will be punished;" and so Miss Gertie was to be taught her first lesson in life by that best of all teachers, experience.

Not long after this warning given her by her mamma, Gertie was dressing for dancing-school, where she dearly loved to go, but she was so full of antics and capers that her nurse could scarcely dress her. Her mamma noticed how unmanageable she was, and said,

"Gertie, stop your dancing now, and let Annie dress you. Mind me at once, or

if you are not ready when the other little girls stop for you, you shall not go."

But Miss Gertie, as usual, did not heed her mamma's word, and kept on hindering her nurse from making her ready. When the bell rang, therefore, and her mamma called to her from the parlor, Gertie was not dressed. She came down, however, shortly, with her little white astrachan cap and muff, quite ready to start. Her mamma looked at her gravely, and said,

"You did not mind me when I spoke to you, else you would have been ready the minute I called you. You may take off your things now; you cannot go to dancing-school to-day."

Poor Gertie burst into tears.

"Mamma, you always called me—two or three—times—before," she sobbed.

"But I shall never speak to you but once after this, you know; you must mind me then, or you will be punished, you see. I want you to remember."

Gertie's grandma thought it was "hard," and grandpa too would liked to have taken his darling right off to dancing-school, but mamma was firm in her determination to make her little girl obedient, and would not allow them to palliate the punishment.

When bedtime came, as usual mamma's pleasant voice called down,

"Dollie dear, it's bedtime; kiss all good-night and come up stairs."

But Gertie was reading her picture-book about "Little white Lily," and answered, "Wait a minute," without stirring.

Presently mamma came down stairs and took up her sewing. Gertie looked up surprised.

"Why, mamma, who'll undress me?" she asked, anxiously.

"You must undress yourself to-night," answered mamma, going on with her sewing. "I called you when I was ready, and you did not come."

"But, mamma dear, who will tuck me in?" faltered Gertie.

"Little girls who will not mind their mammas through the day must not expect to be tucked in by them at night," replied her mamma.

"Who'll I say my prayers to, then?" sobbed Gertie.

"Say your prayers to God, Gertie, and ask him to help you to be a better and more obedient little girl," her mother answered, kissing her good-night.

Gertie cried bitterly, and begged her mamma to go up stairs with her again, but it was of no use; she was obliged to go alone and undress herself that night.

Next morning, when her mamma called, Gertie did not come right up from the breakfast-table to have her clean apron on and her curls brushed in time for school; and when she started at last, it was ten minutes past nine, and her mamma gave her a little note for the teacher.

Dinner was all over when Gertie came home that day with red eyes and a crest-fallen look.

"What ails my darling?" asked grandma, when she saw the pretty face all dark with shame.

"I was kept in," stammered Gertie.

"What for?" asked her mamma.

"For being late."

"Ah, Gertie, Gertie!" said her mamma; "you see the fruits of your disobedience are coming fast. If you had minded me when I first called you this morning, you would have had ample time to dress and get to school early, and would then not have had the shame and mortification of being kept in."

Gertie held her head down to hide her tears. She felt the truth of her mamma's words. She was just beginning to see by experience that in not minding when first spoken to she would be the sufferer and loser always.

Grandma felt grieved to see her darling troubled, and so she thought she would try a method too to cure Gertie of her fault. She got a little book and wrote "Gertie's Behavior" on the outside.

"Now, Dollie," said she, when she showed it to Gertie, "every night before you go to bed, I will write in this little book 'Good' or 'Bad,' whichever name you deserve. If you do not mind mamma or any one else who bids you do anything through the day, I will write down 'Bad' at night; but if you try to be obedient and obey when first spoken to, I will write 'Good;' and the day you are seven years old, if there are more 'Goods' than 'Bads' in the book, I will make you a pretty present, but if there are more 'Bads,' I shall feel very sorry and grieved."

Gertie looked at the little book, and heaved a heavy sigh, then answered,

"Well, grandma, I'll try very hard to be good always, so as you can write it down every night;" and she did try.

Of course, at first, it was very hard for her to remember and always mind directly she was spoken to, but grandma knew how Habit holds us all in her tight grasp, and so made due allowances for her little granddaughter's shortcomings, seeing that she was really striving to do better.

Time went on, and little Gertie struggled and strove with all her heart to merit the "good" name grandma would put down at night-time with so much pleasure. After a while it grew to be as easy for her to obey at once when her mamma or grandma or grandpa spoke to her as it used to be to dally, and not listen and not mind. And so at last, when her birthday came, Gertie's "behavior book" contained more good marks than bad ones; and when she woke up the day she was seven years old, she found sitting beside her bed in a little chair a beautiful French doll, with a trunk full of pretty dresses—a present from grandma—and a beautiful cup with "For my Good Little Girl" on it in gold letters from her mamma, and the loveliest little pocket-book with money in it from grandpa.

And now she says she wants to tell all those little girls who do not mind their mammas that she finds it just as easy to do things when first told as it was to say, "Wait a minute," and put off obeying until the last moment, as she used to do. And she hopes all such little girls will try to break themselves of that bad habit, for it grieves their mammas and makes everybody think them unlovable.

DICK.

A TRUE STORY.

By M. O. J.

A LARGE, spirited, powerful horse managed one day, in the absence of his owner, to let himself out of his stable and into the pasture, where he fed and capered to his heart's content.

All the farm hands left their work "to catch him." But it proved no easy matter.

As soon as any one of them approached him he laid down his ears, showed his teeth and reared, striking at them with his fore feet. In this way he kept them at a respectful distance, till the daughter of the gentleman who owned him happened to see their unsuccessful efforts.

"That's no way to catch that horse," she said, and went herself directly to the field.

"Here, Dick! Dick!" she called, holding her hand toward him and snapping her fingers.

The horse pricked up his ears, and a pleasant look came into his eyes, which just before were flashing defiance. The look said as plainly as words,

"Ah! there's a friend. I know her voice; it is always kind. She never strikes me, but gives me many an apple and many a pat. I love her, and I'll do just as she says."

She walked up to him, took hold of his foretop, and while the men stood gazing, dumfounded, expecting every moment to see him rear or bite, she led him across the field and door-yard, and into the stable.

THE TRUE HISTORY OF THE CAT AND THE FIDDLE.

By George Macdonald.

HEY, diddle, diddle!
The cat and the fiddle!
He played such a merry tune
That the cow went mad
With the pleasure she had,
And jumped right over the moon.
But then, don't you see?
Before that could be,
The moon had come down and listened.
The little dog hearkened
So loud that he barkened,
"There's nothing like it, there isn't."

Hey, diddle, diddle!
Went the cat and the fiddle,
Hey diddle, diddle, dee, dee!
The dog laughed at the sport
Till his cough cut him short,
It was hey diddle, diddle, oh me!
And back came the cow
With a merry, merry low,
For she'd humbled the man in the moon.
The dish got excited,
The spoon was delighted,
And the dish waltzed away with the spoon.

But the man in the moon,
Coming back too soon
From the famous town of Norwich,
Caught up the dish,
Said, "It's just what I wish
To hold my cold plum-porridge!"
Gave the cow a rat-tat,
Flung water on the cat,
And sent him away like a rocket,
Said, "Oh, Moon, there you are!"
Got into her car,
And went off with the spoon in his pocket.

Hey ho! diddle, diddle!
The wet cat and wet fiddle,
They made such a caterwauling
That the cow in a fright
Stood bolt upright,
Bellowing now, and bawling;
And the dog on his tail
Stretched his neck with a wail,
But "Ho! ho!" said the man in the moon—
"No more in the South
Shall I burn my mouth,
For I've found a dish and a spoon."

BLACKWOOD'S LITTLE GRANDCHILD.

"AUNTIE, my boots want mending— my fishing boots; may Samuel take them directly to old Blackwood, and say they must be back to-morrow?"

"Blackwood is away, dear—gone to his daughter's funeral," said Miss Preston, a somewhat stiff old maid in the eye of the world, but really the devoted slave and admirer of the young nephew who was spending the holidays with her.

"Please, sir," said Samuel, who chanced to be in the room at the time, "Blackwood's come back—last night—brought a little girl with him, almost an infant," he added, glancing at his mistress, whom he knew the news would interest.

"A child! an infant! Not to keep in that dirty hole, I do hope!" said Miss Preston. "Oh dear! this must be seen to at once. Blackwood can't keep himself decent, much less a child. I must go down directly."

Now, Blackwood the shoemaker had greatly troubled and incensed well-meaning Miss Preston during the three years she had lived in Bridgely; he was dirty, he was silent, he was poor, and he would neither clean himself nor talk nor accept alms at her hand.

"He did well enough," was all the reply she could get from him.

And this from a man who seldom afforded himself meat, rarely had a clean shirt, and did not seem to take the least notice of Sunday. And he to have a child dependent upon him! Shocking! not to be permitted! The workhouse was better for it. Miss Preston put on her bonnet in a state of virtuous indignation.

Darling Reginald's boots were quite forgotten.

Down to the dirty, dark cottage went the good lady, returning, however, somewhat crestfallen. Blackwood was more silent and obstinate than ever; he had said he meant to keep the child, and that was all. Poor little neglected innocent!

"May he have my boots to mend?" said Reginald, who was a man of one idea, and at the present moment it was the fishing boots.

"Yes, dear. Samuel, take them," said Miss Preston, who was positively depressed at the grievous prospects of Blackwood's little grandchild.

"And say they are to be back to-morrow, sharp," said Reginald.

And, something to the young gentleman's surprise, the boots did come back on the morrow well repaired, and even before he expected them.

"Auntie, Blackwood's not such a slow coach these holidays," he declared. "Look

at these boots, he has made a very tidy job of them; and that little girl of his is a jolly-looking little thing."

"How do you know, Reginald?" asked his aunt.

"He brought her to the back door on his shoulder, and I gave her a new penny," said Reginald, proud of his essay in alms-giving.

"Sadly neglected, I fear," said Miss Preston, shaking her head.

"Her face and her pinafore was very clean, mum," said the ever-attentive Samuel, who was in waiting for the boots.

It was not in Miss Preston's nature to let things be, so very soon she set out again on a visit to old Blackwood, this time hopeful, for she had something with her he could not refuse—a nomination to Lady Courtley's orphan home. Blackwood's cottage was as dim and dirty as usual, but there was a spot of bright color in it to-day; on a little stool near the old man sat a yellow-haired child, whose crossed legs displayed a shining pair of scarlet shoes.

"He made them," said the child, pointing to her grandfather, and imagining that all the world must be deeply interested in her new shoes. But Miss Preston was too eager to be diverted from her purpose; she just nodded to the little thing, and then unfolded her scheme to old Blackwood.

"Rosamond, there (what a name for a child!), would be boarded, lodged and educated for nothing, up to the age of fourteen, at her ladyship's orphan home, and finally apprenticed or put into service, without one atom of expense or trouble on the part of her grandfather." She paused for a word of gratitude from the old man; he opened his mouth twice, and the third time spoke:

"Thank you, thank her ladyship, but she can't go. I want her."

And nothing would shake him. Miss Preston went home quite ill with vexation and anger. Every day for a week Reginald heard the tale of old Blackwood's ingratitude and obstinacy, till at last he said,

"Aunty, don't fret yourself so. I believe you try to do too much good; leave Blackwood his child. I think he'd be very dull without her now—like you are when I'm away."

"But what a sad home for the child!" said Miss Preston, a little influenced by the argument.

"Not so bad as you think," said Regy. "I'm often passing, and he's got an old woman to clean the house; you can see through the panes now, and the little thing—Rose, he calls her—is always hopping about as merry as a bird, in red shoes and a black frock; and Samuel says she is to go to school. And Blackwood himself is quite sharp over his work. I believe he only cared before to do enough cobbling to keep body and soul together, but now it is different, and he can work well if he chooses."

Miss Preston meditated over this account, and thought perhaps she had better let well alone when she found that Rosamond Blackwood did regularly attend the infant-school neatly and cleanly

attired; and even came to church, wonder of wonders! dragging grandfather with her. They sat in the darkest corner of the building, but Miss Preston's quick eye spied them out.

Poor, old, miserable, dirty Blackwood! a wonderful change had come over his life. Miss Preston found it all out later. In the autumn a fever visited the village, and little Rose took it severely. Poor old Blackwood was in despair. Two whole nights Miss Preston sat by the child's sick-bed, giving brandy and medicine to keep the little life in her. Toward daybreak she slept, and the busy doctor, coming in on his earliest rounds, wished the poor old shoemaker joy, the danger was past.

Then the stiff, reserved old man broke down.

"I ask your pardon," he said to Miss Preston, "for my shortness toward you, but I never was one to speak much, and I had a big sorrow always drying me up. I drove that child's mother from home by my harshness because she would marry a fellow I didn't like, and who died a year after; she was my only one, too. I was too proud to show her I was sorry and bid her come back, and I never saw her alive; but she left me the child and a message, 'I know father will be good to it.' So I promised by her grave I would be good to it—it should never hear a hard word if I could help it; and after that I couldn't send it away. Besides, I'm not so old; I can work well yet, and I'm trying to get the place a bit brighter for the little one. I know it wasn't fit for the like of her. I thought my heart would break last night when we thought she was going, for as long as I keep her I feel as if she that's gone and Him as judges could both forgive me. But she's better now, thank Him! and thank you, ma'am."

The speech touched Miss Preston perhaps the more that old Blackwood shrank reverently from uttering the name of the God he seemed to have forgotten so long.

Miss Preston had tried, as Regy said, to do too much good when she wished to deprive old Blackwood of his little grandchild. We must be careful how we sever these natural ties, for love on earth is a type of love in heaven, and may not be thoughtlessly interfered with.

At Christmas, Regy was quite delighted.

"Aunty," he said, "old Blackwood is quite a genius; he can clean my hunting boots he says, and he has a shop full of very respectable boots and shoes now. The little Lydiatts from the Grange were being fitted with blue dancing-shoes; think of that! and he's putting money by for Rosy. She's a regular little beauty, too; it seems to have quite changed the old chap, having that pretty little thing in the house. Don't you remember what a dull, downcast old fellow he used to be before, never a smile for any one, sitting on that old stool of his? I think he must wash his face too now, and his shirt was as clean as mine."

Yes, Miss Preston saw it all, and took a lesson to herself from it—to be more considerate even over her efforts to do good; and the poor, who always respected her, now love her and welcome her freely into their homes.